WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of photographic processing, comprising the step of

applying a layer of an aerially regenerable catalyst to the surface of a developed silver halide photographic material to enable oxidation of silver within the photographic material.

2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising after the step of applying a thin layer of a catalyst, the step of

applying an oxidising agent to the surface of the developed silver halide photographic material to convert any remaining silver in said material to silver halide.

3. A method according to claim 1, in which the catalyst is selected such that the time required for aerial regeneration of the catalyst at the interface of said layer of catalyst with air is from about 0.01 seconds to about 2 seconds.

4. A method according to claim 1, in which the catalyst is a bleaching agent.

5. A method according to claim 1, in which the layer of catalyst applied to the photographic material is uniform.

6. A method according to claim 5, in which the layer of catalyst has a thickness that satisfies the following condition:

$$\text{thickness} < \frac{1}{2}\sqrt{\frac{DtnL_O}{L_{Ag} - L_O}}$$

in which,

D is the average of the diffusion coefficient of the oxidised and reduced species of the catalyst, expressed in m^2/s;

t is the process step time in seconds;

L_O is the laydown of the catalyst expressed in mol/m^2;

L_{Ag} is the laydown of the developed silver in the material to be oxidised, expressed in mol/m^2; and

n in the number of electrons transferred in the oxidising step.

7. A method according to claim 6, in which the layer of catalyst has a thickness that satisfies the following condition:

$$\text{thickness} < \frac{1}{4}\sqrt{\frac{DtnL_O}{L_{Ag} - L_O}}.$$

8. A method according to claim 4, in which the bleaching agent comprises a metal complex bleaching agent.

9. A method according to claim 8, in which the metal complex bleaching agent is selected from the group consisting of iron (III) PDTA, iron (III) EDDS, iron (III) MIDA and cobalt (III) hexammine.